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Statement submitted by Institut Jules-Destrée, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Millennia2025 MAD-Skills: "Master, Apply and Dynamize your skills" to learn, transmit and work: women's empowerment through innovation

The sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, to be held at the United Nations in New York in March 2019, will focus on the theme of sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, drawing upon the conclusions of the Commission's sixtieth session regarding women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development.

We underscore our solidarity with the Commission's sixtieth session in 2016 and will carry forward the recommendations briefly summarized in the report of that session, which expresses "grave concern about the increased difficulties being faced by Palestinian women and girls living under Israeli occupation."

We confirm, in line with the Commission's sixtieth session, that women must have full and equal rights to men in terms of (1) participation in decision-making; (2) access to education and learning throughout their lives; (3) economic independence for the establishment of their businesses; and (4) benefiting from access strategies to public services, credit, professional training, technology, markets, sustainable energy at an affordable price, transport and trade. We confirm the need (5) to encourage all such access and inclusive education for all women, particularly the most disadvantaged; (6) to promote processes to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally; and (7) to ensure women's effective participation in peace processes and mediation efforts, conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in peacekeeping (Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 2016, Commission on the Status of Women, report on the sixtieth session (20 March 2015 and 14–24 March 2016). Most of these recommendations were made in the "Millennia2025 Action Plan for women's empowerment and gender equality", prepared with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris in December 2012.

We also endorse the recommendations of the Commission's sixty-first session in 2017, which charted a clear path towards women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work, with a view to managing technological and digital change for women's economic empowerment. The recommendations advocate for women's access to skills development and decent work in new and emerging fields and seek to enhance women's participation as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders in these fields. Measures were also recommended to allow women to "leverage science and technology for entrepreneurship and economic empowerment in the changing world of work." (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Commission on the Status of Women 2017, "Agreed conclusions", p.3).

We are therefore working, in conjunction with the Millennia2025 Women and Innovation Foundation, to strengthen women's empowerment through innovation, including through the concrete initiative of MAD-Skills: "Master, Apply and Dynamize your skills" to learn, transmit and work. MAD-Skills builds tools while encouraging diversity and the intergenerational, multicultural transmission of skills. Daring to create, innovate and undertake: MAD-Skills proposes to assist its members by enhancing their skills online. A number of tools will help to promote their businesses and activities. The concept of "mad skills" brings a multidimensional expertise to boost skills and talents in order to address current and emerging

challenges, including women's empowerment, full access to their rights and ways of strengthening their economic leadership (www.mad-skills.eu).

Millennia2025 MAD-Skills seeks to provide its members with the necessary secure digital tools, at a cost that is affordable for vulnerable persons, to follow up on the concrete initiative of Millennia2025 Solidarity-Women. Specific support will be offered to women and girls whose learning has been hampered by their life circumstances but who nevertheless utilize their skills in their specific fields to build their own futures. Each beneficiary of MAD-Skills tools will be invited to share one of their skills in order to mobilize the network and strengthen the Millennia2025 intelligence platform for women's empowerment, equality and innovation.

Added value of Millennia2025 MAD-Skills

1. Millennia2025 MAD-Skills offers an innovative solution through the very concept of integrating each individual into digital tool models, allowing them to present, structure and enhance their skills, talents and activities.

2. Millennia2025 MAD-Skills is an innovative concept, based on experience and innovation. The aim is to sustain this concept through a team of young people and an online structure based on the transmission and increase of skills.

3. Education is the principal objective of Millennia2025 MAD-Skills and is addressed in the 608-page book written by Marie-Anne Delahaut, entitled "Together for equality!", which presents foresight methodology, international networks and concrete initiatives for women's empowerment and gender equality from 2007 to 2025. The book has a foreword by Ms. Irina Bokova, former Director-General of UNESCO, and was published by the Millennia2025 Foundation and the Institut Jules-Destrée.

4. Millennia2025 MAD-Skills and the book "Together for equality!" are educational tools aimed at teachers and students. Their areas of focus include:

- Replicable foresight methodology and its application at the global level for women's empowerment and equality
- The experiences and analyses of members of Millennia2025 in a number of countries across several continents with regard to the situation of women and girls
- Creative feminism inspired by several authors and the work of international associations
- The constructive power of networks in raising awareness, solidarity, action and changes in attitude
- The knowledge base, structured using keywords since 2008
- The applications of Millennia2025, the WeObservatory for Women and eHealth
- Access to the knowledge society through quality online tools for "Master, Apply and Dynamize skills" in order to learn, teach and work
- Language training, as the texts presented in French in the book are in English on the portal.

MAD-Skills is proactive with regard to information and communications technology and its future developments. All technology can be useful and aligned with the objectives of its members, in the context of the Commission's session. We want to implement these guidelines for all actors at the international and multilingual levels. The main goal is to empower women and girls, but we are all aware of the

importance of this issue as a key to harmony for humanity, with the will to address the global challenge of sustainable development together.

There has been a steady increase in mobilization for women's empowerment and equal rights among civil society, social partners and political leaders. Since 2014, the concrete initiatives resulting from the Millennia2025 action plan, presented by the information and gender equality society hub of the Institut Jules-Destrée in coordination with the Millennia2025 Women and Innovation Foundation, have been focused on solutions to help women in vulnerable situations escape poverty through innovation with Millennia2025 Solidarity-Women; on combating violence against women pursuant to the Istanbul Convention; and on economic leadership as a major key for women's empowerment, alongside education, equality and justice, with Millennia2025 She4Innovation working in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

Millennia2025 MAD-Skills, a new concrete initiative nominated for the World Summit on the Information Society Prizes 2018, is being led by Marie-Anne Delahaut, Director of Research at the Institut Jules-Destrée, President of the Millennia2025 Women and Innovation Foundation and founder, network administrator and web designer of mad-skills.eu.

Building a network of information and communications technology tools to enhance the talents and skills of women and girls around the world is our goal, in line with the Commission's session. Aiming for equality together will make us stronger!